

EYE WITNESSES
[BINDER] 1 of 5

DRAWER 13A

ASSASSINATION

71.2009.085 02203

The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln

Recollections and accounts of
eyewitnesses

Published accounts

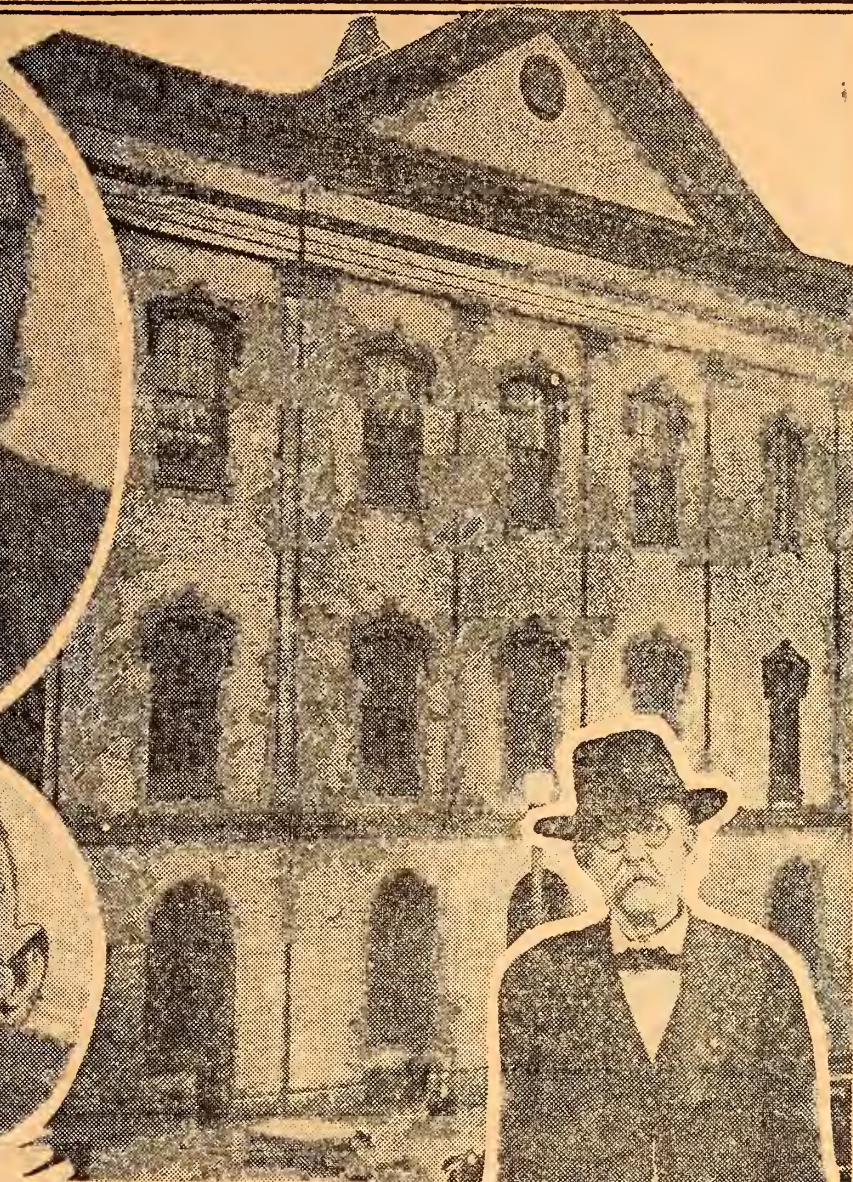
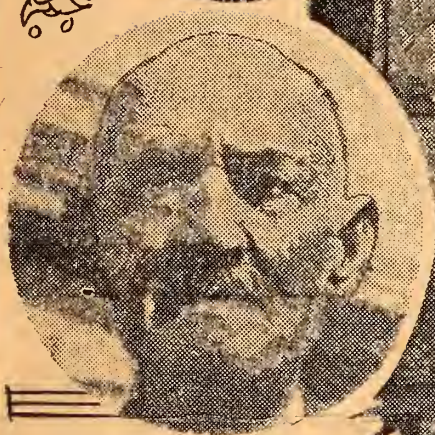
Folder 1

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71.2009.085.02203

Lincoln Assassination Narrated By Two Men Who Saw Tragedy



"We Knew Crack of Revolver Was Not Part of Play," Says C. L. Willis, Who Beheld Wilkes Booth Leap From Box.

Wash. Post-Wash. D. C. - 3-14-1929.

The curtain rose for the third and last act of the comedy, "Our American Cousin," at Ford's Theater, in Tenth street, 64 years ago tonight, "and hardly one word had been spoken," Charles L. Willis, of the Willard Court Apartments, said yesterday, "when the sharp crack of a revolver was heard."

Mr. Willis is one of the two or three persons alive today who was in the historic old theater on the memorable night of April 14, 1865.

"We all knew it was not a part of the play," the octogenarian pointed

out, speaking of the "crack of a revolver," and "for a few seconds everything was still. A cry, 'The President is shot,' and the audience stood and looked toward the point from whence the sound came."

At the time of the assassination of President Lincoln Mr. Willis was a stripling of 18 summers, born in Baltimore but a resident of Washington for four years.

"I thought the world of that man," Mr. Willis went on, reminiscing. "He had the kindest eye I ever saw in a man's head. I remember that whenever he appeared in public I would

Upper—Ford's Theater; Inset, Abraham Lincoln.

Lower—Left inset, J. W. Epperson. Right, Charles L. Willis.

Epperson Viewed Stage Struggle; Took Drugs to President.

Special to The Washington Post.

Brownwood, Tex., April 13.—The great and mighty of Washington were filing into Ford's Theater on the night of April 14, 1865.

Three newsboys stood near the entrance. Two of them had "sold out" and the third had only one paper left. A tall, ungainly figure, with long coat and stovepipe hat, stopped and bought the remaining paper, smiling at the newsboy. It was the President, Abraham Lincoln. Secretary Stanton asked for a paper, too, and was slightly annoyed because there was none for him.

The President and his party proceeded into the theater, leaving the boy staring after them. The newsboy was J. W. Epperson, 11, now a 75-year-old carpenter of Brownwood, Tex., one of the two or three surviving persons who saw Lincoln assassinated.

Epperson and his two friends—one was named McClelland and the other Dougherty—both dead long ago—purchased tickets for the performance and climbed to the balcony. It was their regular custom.

When John Wilkes Booth appeared on the stage, one of the boys whispered, "There's that crazy fellow."

Epperson had sold papers to Booth regularly and many of the theatrical folk knew them casually. He had sold a paper to the silent and moody Booth earlier that evening.

When the shot was fired the eyes of Epperson and every one in the theater were drawn to the President's box. There they saw Secretary Stanton struggling with Booth, saw the demented actor thrown into the lap of a woman, pick himself up and hurry through the back of the theater.

The dazed theatergoers began to stir. Epperson left the balcony and squirmed his way to the scene of the excitement.

When the fatally wounded President was carried out of the theater and to a house across the street the newsboy followed.

Dr. Marshall, the President's physician, wanted an errand boy to run to the drug store. He saw Epperson staring wide-eyed in the street. He called him, and all that night the little newsboy ran back and forth carrying medicine for Mr. Lincoln.

The next day Mr. Lincoln died.

Epperson began to sell papers early the morning of the fifteenth, after Dr. Marshall dismissed him, and there was no difficulty in making sales. By noon the boy could hardly stand, after his sleepless night. He slept a while, then resumed his sales.

Epperson was born in Kentucky, went to New York, began as a newsboy, wandered to Baltimore and then to Washington, arriving in the Capital in February, 1865.

Mr. Lincoln was no stranger to him, for he had first seen the gangling figure of the future Chief Executive several years previously in Illinois. Mr. Lincoln spoke to a few countrymen at a little crossroads store, and among his listeners was Epperson.

In Washington the newsboy took up his stand near Ford's Theater and thus became acquainted with Booth and the other actors.

"Booth always acted queerly," he says. "And was generally accepted as what we now would call a 'nut.'"

"Mrs. Surratt and the other plotters picked him for actual commission of crime for this reason."

Those were great days for the newsboy. Epperson says. After a battle a paper would sell for from 5 cents to \$1, depending on just how excited was the citizenry.

try to see him. And I am proud to say that I once shook hands with him."

Mr. Willis' story is graphic, first hand, an eyewitness account of the scene at the theater the night Lincoln was shot. In his own words let him tell it:

"On Good Friday, April 14, 1865, the Washington newspapers stated that President Lincoln and party would attend the performance at Ford's Theater that evening."

"Miss Laura Keane, a favorite actress, was to appear in the comedy, 'Our American Cousin.' I was then a young man, 18 years of age, and very fond of the theater. I suggested to my chum that we go to the theater that night. He readily acceded, and we were a part of a large audience present on that occasion. The theater was well filled, and the audience appreciative and happy. The first two acts passed off pleasantly, and when the curtain dropped at the close of the second act I suggested to my friend that we go out during the intermission."

As the two young men were on their way out of the theater, it might be well to interrupt the continuity to explain that the boyhood chum to whom Mr. Willis refers was John A. Downs, who has been dead for at least twenty years, his survivor estimated. Going on after the interruption, Mr. Willis said:

"While standing on the pavement in front of the theater we saw John Wilkes Booth come out and enter a small restaurant adjoining the theater. Booth was a great favorite of all theatergoers, most especially the young. He was a handsome man, very white skin, piercing eyes, and jet black curly hair. Only a short time before I had seen him perform in the same theater with Miss Alice Grey, his last public performance."

"My friend and I reentered the theater and resumed our seats, which were located in the orchestra, our chairs being not more than seven rows from the stage and nearly beneath the box occupied by the President and party. As we entered the theater I saw Booth talking to John Buckingham, with whom I was personally acquainted."

Buckingham, Mr. Willis paused again to explain, puffing one of the three cigars he permits himself each day, was the doorman at the theater, as well as "an employee of my father." Mr. Willis' father was Cornelius L. Willis.

"The curtain rose for the third and last act," the old man took up his narrative, "and hardly one word had been spoken when the sharp crack of a revolver was heard. We all knew that it was not a part of the play and for a few seconds everything was very still. A cry, 'The President is shot,' and the audience stood and looked toward the point from whence the sound came. I saw a man climbing over the rail in front of the box; he leaped to the stage a few feet to his right. As he landed on the stage he staggered; raising his right arm, he muttered a few words and quickly disappeared in the scenery on the left of the stage."

"A man sprang from the audience, climbed to the stage and made pursuit. The audience was now all standing, and with little or no shouting or disorder. I suggested to my friend that we go out, and we did so."

"As it appeared that very few were coming out we reentered the theater and in my excited condition I went directly on the stage where actors and part of the audience were mingled together, all gazing up to the box where the wounded President lay. Amid all this excitement, to the best of my recollection, there was not much noise; all were shocked, talking in subdued tones."

"The audience began to leave the theater. On the outside the crowd was

great, and I made for a place to avoid the gathering. I took refuge on the porch in front of a house across the street and in a few moments four men carrying the wounded President went up into this same house with him."

"In this house the President died the following morning, April 15, between 7 and 8 o'clock."

The crowd by this time was great. Shouts of "Lynch him," "Hang him," "They've got him," were heard all around, and the crowd surged from side to side.

I started toward Pennsylvania avenue to take a car for my home on Capitol Hill. A man said to me, "What's the matter?" My teeth chattered; I could not speak. I reached the car and all were talking of the assassination. They said Seward was killed, Grant was killed. The excitement among all was intense; there was more loud talking on that car than in the theater."

When I reached home near midnight, my mother, hearing some tumult, asked me what was the matter. I said, "Nothing." I feared if I told her what had been done, she and my father would sleep no more that night. The next morning I went to the Government department where I was employed and, after telling my experience, asked to be excused. I walked directly up F street northwest to the corner of Tenth street, and looked toward the house where the President lay, and what seems strange to me now, there were no crowds around the place. Later in the day all the Government departments closed until after the funeral, which occurred on the following Thursday.

When the body of the President was lying in state in the rotunda of the Capitol thousands passed through to review the remains, entering on the west front, passing in double file and leaving on the east side.

I forced myself through the crowd, and for the last time I saw President Lincoln.

Mr. Willis has read more than once, he said, of the death of some one of whom the statement was made, "He was the last person who was present at the theater on the night of the assassination of President Lincoln." Mr. Willis characterizes such announcements as absurd, pointing out that "I was a little more than 18 years of age and among the audience of more than 1,000 there were, no doubt, many of my age or under. There may be some others living who were present."

The 18-year-old boy present at Ford's Theater to see the comedy, "Our American Cousin," one of the very last, at least, of "the audience of more than 1,000" was born in Baltimore October 17, 1846. A bookbinder by trade, he worked in the Government Printing Office here for 46 years, retiring when the retirement law went into effect in August, 1920. Since then he has been taking things easy, living for his wife of more than 50 years, their sons and their daughters, thinking of the past and the present, and who will win the baseball game today.

RECALLS LINCOLN'S DEATH

JUNE 10 1915

TROUTNER IN THEATER WHEN PRESIDENT WAS SHOT.

SIoux CITY, IOWA, JOURNAL PRESENT LATER AT HANGING

**Saw End of Four Who Had Been
Convicted as Booth's Accomplices
—For Years Had Piece of Rope
that Formed Mrs. Suratt's Noose.**

Among the 1,000 veterans of the civil war assembled in Sioux City for the state encampment of the G. A. R. is J. F. Troutner, of Charles City, Ia., who not only served throughout the conflict between the north and the south, but who later was present at the performance at the Ford theater at Washington when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth on the evening of April 14, 1865. In Sioux City today there are four men, including Mr. Troutner, who witnessed the hanging of George A. Atzerodt, Mrs. Mary E. Suratt, Lewis Powell, alias Payne, and David E. Herold, accomplices of Booth in the murder.

The Lincoln tragedy is not more exactly recorded in the pages of history than it is remembered by Mr. Troutner. It is all the more vivid to him because he was a friend of Lincoln, having met and held conversations with him in the White House several times.

Mr. Troutner has passed his seventy-third birthday, but is unusually active for his age. His recollection of dates and names is remarkable.

"The regiment to which I belonged, which was the Fourteenth United States Veteran Volunteers, was stationed at Winchester, Va., at the time Lincoln was assassinated," said Mr. Troutner, "but I happened to be working in the regimental commissary department at Washington. My regiment had been at Winchester only a few days and I intended to leave shortly for that point.

Had Seat Near Lincoln.

"On the night of April 14, 1865, I went to the Ford theater, where the president was to be. The title of the play presented that night was 'Our American Cousins,' and many soldiers were present. I was seated in the family circle about five or six rows from the stage.

"Lincoln and a party of his friends were seated in a box not far from me. Everyone seemed to be interested in the play. After the conclusion of the first act—it was customary for us to do so—we left our seats to take some refreshments. Shortly after I returned to my seat I saw Booth edging near the president's box. He lingered there for a moment and then leaned toward his victim. The second act had not yet started and Booth's presence caused no interest, as he was often seen at the theater. Having seen him in plays a number of times I recognized him.

"While waiting for the second act to start, the report of a pistol was heard, but this was nothing unusual. It was shortly after the close of the war and shooting in the city still was common. It appeared as though someone in the rear of the theater might have fired, but the audience exhibited no interest.

"No one knew that Lincoln had been shot until Maj. Henry R. Rathbone, who had accompanied the president, arose and requested that some soldiers come to the box. He then announced that Lincoln had been shot. We rushed to the front, but Maj. Rathbone advised us that only six soldiers were wanted.

Booth's Frantic Flight.

"Booth was observed climbing over the railing of the box near Lincoln. In an effort to hurry away and make his es-

cape he caught his left foot on a flag below the railing. Losing his balance he fell to the stage eight or ten feet below, suffering a broken leg. In a desperate attempt to flee, he brushed the stage curtain aside and struggled out, running over the stage and escaping through the rear entrance.

"Having the murder well planned he mounted a horse in the rear of the theater and rode away. Edward Spangler, a supernumerary for the Ford theater, who later was sentenced to prison as an accomplice, was given \$10 for watching the animal during the absence of Booth, I was told.

"In the meantime Lincoln, mortally wounded, was laid upon a window shutter and carried to a little lodging house across Tenth street from the theater. The soldiers were ordered to form a guard so that the president might be carried away quickly to a place where medical aid could be administered.

"Citizens were excited. Pandemonium had broken loose. Hardly had we crossed the street when a throng of excited people came rushing down the street toward us, crying the news that an attempt to assassinate Secretary of State William H. Seward and his son, Frederick, had been made by Lewis Powell. All was not yet ended, for terror was added when another mob of persons came rushing from the Baltimore and Ohio station with the information that Grant had been shot. Grant was to have been included in the president's theater party, and had he arrived as he had planned, George A. Atzerodt probably would have killed him, for he was waiting at the station. Missing his connections at the Relay house probably saved Grant his life.

"Atzerodt had been stationed at the railway terminal to await the arrival of Grant and to assassinate him. With all

SAW SURATT HANGING.



J. F. Troutner.

this news coming in simultaneously, the inhabitants were wild with fear that the entire cabinet of the president was to be killed. Terror, sorrow and anger prevailed for many days and the city was placed under guard, while the search for Booth and his accomplices went on. I was one of the guards who watched the city until July 15.

At Martyr's Deathbed.

"The morning following the attempt to assassinate Lincoln—the president had died already—I viewed him on his deathbed. I did not attend his funeral because I had been detailed to guard duty."

Like every other description of Lincoln, Mr. Troutner pictures him as being tall, lean, homely and one of the kindest men he ever met.

He had a vigorous handshake and was as cordial and courteous as any man I ever knew," said Mr. Troutner. "I chatted with him at the White House on several occasions. One time he gave me the military salute before I observed him. Then he queried me: 'Where do you come from?' 'From Iowa,' I told him. And the one thing of which I have always felt proud is that he answered by saying that 'Iowa is one of the best states in the union.'

Speaking of the execution of the condemned four Mr. Troutner said:

"On July 7, 1865, I had the pleasure of being detailed as a guard at the hanging of Atzerodt, Mrs. Suratt, Herold and Powell. I saw the death trap sprung, but was too far away to hear the prisoners speak."

Kept Part of Noose.

Mr. Troutner declared that after the hanging he came into possession of a piece of rope which was used as the noose for Mrs. Suratt. He kept it as a memento.

"I showed the piece of rope to my friends frequently afterwards, and when they so desired I used to cut off a little

end for them," he said. "By cutting off little strips the rope became so short that last year I lost it altogether."

Among the notable battles in which Mr. Troutner took part were those of Blue Hills, Shiloh and the Vicksburg campaign. He was wounded only once during the war and that occurred in the engagement at Blue Hills. He was shot in the left side of his body, between the ribs. The bullet was never extracted.


On one occasion Mr. Troutner narrowly missed being killed. It was on a sultry day and he wore little clothing. He was carrying his rubber blanket across his body. It had been folded sixteen times. A cannister missile struck and penetrated the sixteen folds, knocking Mr. Troutner down, but not injuring him.

"My body was black and blue for a time afterwards, but otherwise I suffered no ill effects," Mr. Troutner said. After the cannister struck me the rebels picked me up and I was in the Libby Belle island prison, near Richmond, for four months."

Tuesday it was fifty-four years since Mr. Troutner became a soldier. He joined the Third Iowa regiment at the beginning of the war, and later enlisted in the Fourteenth United States Volunteer regiment. He was honorably discharged from both regiments.

After the war he returned to Iowa and began farming. He farmed near Nashua, Ia., sixteen miles from Charles City, until 1900, when he retired and went to live in Charles City.

WRIGHT



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The Assassination of President Lincoln

By JOSEPH H. HAZLETON (An eye witness)

ON THE 14th day of April, 1865, a little school boy, with his school books in a strap thrown carelessly across his shoulder, romped down Tenth Street in Washington, D.C., and as he approached old Ford's Theatre there stood in front a tall, stately man, swarthy of complexion, raven black curly hair, a drooping moustache, and a wondrous kind eye. That man was John Wilkes Booth, who that night, by the act of a mad-man swayed the destiny of our nation. The little school boy was myself.

It was a great thing for my little companion and myself to speak to Mr. Booth, or to have him speak to us. We looked upon him as something beyond the ordinary. As I started to pass him, I lifted my cap and said "How do you do, Mr. Booth." He beckoned me over to him, lifted my cap from my head, ran his fingers through my hair and said: "Well, little man, are you going to be an actor some day?" I was program boy and ran errands around the Theatre at the time. I replied: "I don't know, Mr. Booth, perhaps." Little did I dream at that time that I would spend fifty years of my life in the theatrical profession. Booth took from his pocket a little folder, which contained the coin of the day commonly known as "shin plasters" of the denominations of five, ten, twenty-five and fifty cents. Handing me a ten cent plaster, he pulled my hat playfully over my eyes, patted me on the shoulders and bade me run buy myself something. I have wondered, in the intervening years, whether that man had that terrible crime on his mind at that time, when talking to an innocent little school boy.

Well, I went around the Theatre that night, as was my custom, doing a few chores for the actors, then went around in front of the house to hand out programs. It was a gala night, the play was "Our American Cousin" and Laura Keene was the star. Almost every one knew that the President would be there as the newspapers had made extensive note of the fact. The house was packed, the gold lace of the Army and Navy predominating.

The President and his party came late, the second act was on, and as Mr. Lincoln entered the audience rose en masse and cheered, Mr. Lincoln came down to the front of the box which had been reserved for him, and with that sad, sweet smile, which he was wont to wear on such occasions, bowed his acknowledgements and took his seat and the play went on.

The third act was on and I was standing directly opposite the President's box, looking up at him and noting with childish delight to see how he was enjoying the play. I happened to turn my head toward the main entrance and saw Wilkes-Booth enter. He stopped a moment to say a word to Mr. Buckingham, the door-keeper, then started upstairs to the Dress Circle. As he passed along the side aisle toward the President's box, I noted the change in his dress. When he spoke to me in the afternoon he was dressed in the height of fashion, in the picturesque costume of the day, velvet collar and cuffs, now he was wearing heavy riding boots, spurs, a blue flannel shirt and an army slouch hat. I wondered in my boyish way what he was doing there on such a gala night dressed in such a garb.

I did not have long to wait, there was a flash, a report and President Lincoln had been assassinated. There are

not words in the English language to describe the awful hush which fell over the house when the shot was fired. Everyone seemed to realize that something terrible had happened but no one seemed to take the initiative, until Laura Keene, rushing down to the footlights, cried out, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the President has been shot." Then all was confusion.

When Booth fired the shot he dropped the weapon, a single barrelled affair, called a derringer, and drawing a Bowie knife ran to the edge of the box. Major Rathbone tried to stop him, and received an ugly wound on his arm. Booth leaped over the rail of the box to the stage, but his spur caught in the American flag which draped the box and he fell to the stage. History says he broke his leg, such is not the case, had he done so he never could have gotten across the sixty feet of stage, however he did fracture the small bones in his ankle. To my dying day I shall never forget the look of anguish and despair on that man's face, as he half dragged himself to the center. Then brandishing the knife above his head and with a maniac stare, cried out, "Sic Semper Tyrannis." He managed to get to the stage door where his horse was being held, mounted and rode rapidly away. Booth got across the Potomac River with young Dave Herold, who was in the conspiracy to kill Mr. Lincoln. They got to Chas. Garrett's farm in Rapahonoke county, where, history says, Booth was shot by Boston Corbett of Col. Bakers' Secret Service Command.

But let's leave Booth and return to the theatre. They carefully lifted the President and carried him across the street to the home of Mr. Peterson, one of our merchants. The building is now being used as the Olroyd Lincoln Museum. Mr. Peterson had a small house and a large family so the only vacant room was a small hall bedroom in the rear of the first floor. They took the President in, put him gently to bed and sent for the members of the Cabinet and his family, also Dr. Stone, his personal physician, and the vigil of the night began.

Gray dawn was streaking through the window on the morning of April 15th when Dr. Stone, holding the President's hand and feeling that his life was fast ebbing away, said to Secretary Stanton, who was Secretary of War, "Mr. Stanton, what time it is?" Secretary Stanton taking his watch out replied, "Twenty-two minutes past seven." Then Dr. Stone, placing the President's hand gently across his breast, sighed out: "The President is dead." Then Secretary Stanton uttered that famous remark that will go thundering through the corridors of time: "Now he belongs to the Ages."

And when the spirit of that mighty man soared its way to that bourne from which no traveler returns, it served to weld an unbreakable link of steel between the North and the South, making it one grand and beautiful nation that stood in 1865 as it stands today, with outstretched arms to welcome the oppressed of other nations to our shores; to build their homes here in America, and it still stands as it stood then when our martyred President met his doom, ready at all hazards, by force of arms, if necessary, to protect its honor, its integrity, and its flag—the flag of the greatest nation on earth—The United States of America.

Sincerely Yours,

Joseph H. Hazleton

TELLS HEARERS HOW LINCOLN WAS SHOT.

***Eye-Witness Surrounded by
Young and Old Who Listen
In Awed Silence.***

Reuben Withers, who, as told in yesterday's World, was a member of the orchestra in Ford's Theatre, Washington, the night Lincoln was assassinated, held an informal reception in his store, No. 4433 White Plains avenue, last night.

Seated on a box in the little shop Mr. Withers told of the scenes attending the tragedy. Grouped about him were children, young men and girls and old men and women. They listened in awed silence and there was not one interruption as the gray-haired man, with marked simplicity, told his story. Several times tears welled in his eyes as he spoke of the martyred President.

Emancipation for This Negro in 1909.

COLUMBUS, Feb. 12.—Gov. Harmon announced a Lincoln Day pardon, John Ross, colored, who was sentenced in 1897 for murder, being the lucky man.

THE ASSASSINATION BY AN EYEWITNESS

104. (LINCOLN). Burnham, C. N. Editor and Proprietor of the "Observer" Cameron, Missouri. Letter Signed in full, 4to, 2 pages, 1917, relating the story of the fateful Good Friday evening at Ford's Theatre, in Washington, where he had witnessed at close range the assassination of President Lincoln. Written out in his old age, however a story he had told so often, that he set it down clearly for his correspondent. Immaculate condition. 49.00.

Burnham (as he also relates in this letter) had served 3 years as soldier in the Army of the Potomack had been through all the battles up to and inclusive Fredericksburg, where he was captured, kept in Libbey prison, from there paroled, and had come to Washington to visit with his wife. He read about President Lincoln's attending that night Ford's Theatre and wanted his wife to see President Lincoln whom he himself had met. He then tells the story of this evening.

Ames letter Oct 1942

Booth Flourished Dagger, Asserts This Eyewitness

BY THOMAS A. LAIRD.

An Eyewitness, Whose Account Differs
From That of Maynard.

AFTER dinner on April 14, 1865, while on Pennsylvania avenue, walking toward the Capitol, I met a friend, who invited me to go to Ford's Theater with him. We took seats in the fourth row from the stage, to the right of the orchestra leader, about 15 feet from President Lincoln's box.

The theater was packed, it being a "gala night" because of the presence of the presidential party, Gen. Grant having also had been expected. "Our American Cousin" was played, Laura Keene taking the part of Florence Trenchard.

President Sits in Rear.

The first act was about half over when the President's party arrived, and the audience cheered enthusiastically until after the party was seated, when the play was resumed. We had a full view of the box and its occupants. Maj. Rathbone and Miss Harris sat in front and the President and Mrs. Lincoln were farther back.

In the third act, Mme. Mountchesington (Mrs. D. Kelly) leaves the stage in a huff, saying to Asa Trenchard (Harry Hawk): "You don't understand the manners of good society. That alone can excuse the impertinence of which you are guilty."

Trenchard—I guess I know enough to turn you inside out! The audience claps and cheers.

Footstep Heard Behind Box.

Just then we heard a footstep in the passage back of the President's box, and very soon thereafter a pistol shot, and a man appeared at the front of the box and leaned over the railing, pushing aside the American flags that draped it, and, with one foot on the outer ledge, swung himself outward and dropped to the stage.

His spur caught in one of the flags and he fell to the stage, but recovered himself and flourished a dagger. Stepping backward and holding his dagger above his head, he uttered the words "Sic Semper Tyrannis."

He then worked his way to the right entrance and out to the alley in the rear of the theater.

A Few Minutes After 10.

I and others near me recognized John Wilkes Booth as he fell on the stage. To me he was no stranger, for I had seen him riding a bay horse that very afternoon down Pennsylvania avenue. I had often seen him in Cincinnati, where he played Petruchio and Ingotmar at Wood's Theater.

While he was making his way out of the theater it appeared that somebody was helping him, by the way in which the scenery was withdrawn out of his path. The time was a few minutes after 10 o'clock.

"Cut His Heart Out!"

Most of the audience rose to its feet, many shouting "Catch him!" "He has shot the President!" "Cut his heart

out!" But no one molested the assassin, and he escaped.

A woman near me had fainted at her escort's feet. I helped to place her in a chair. Many others were in a hysterical condition. I lost my companion in the excitement. The noise was awful; the tumult and shrieks continued.

Miss Keene stepped to the front of the stage and, raising her hand, said, "Please be seated. The President is not dead." She then picked up a glass of water, came down the steps near the drummer of the orchestra, passed me in the center aisle and worked her way through the crowd toward the street front, turned to her left and came back to the President's box.

Rushes to Maj. Eckert.

All this occupied possibly two minutes; so short a space of time, and yet long enough for all to realize that a most dastardly deed had been committed.

I went out of the theater to Tenth and F streets and ran to the house of Maj. Thomas T. Eckert, Assistant Secretary of War, three blocks above where I lived. On reaching the door I burst in abruptly, ringing the bell as I entered. A colored servant met me in the hallway and said, "Why, Mistah Laird, you g'wine tear dat door down?"

Maj. and Mrs. Eckert, on the floor above, came to the head of the stairway, the major asking "What's the matter?" I said, "President Lincoln has been shot, at Ford's Theater, but was not dead when I left a few minutes before."

Maj. Eckert's Instructions.

The major was shaving himself, his face being covered with lather. He remarked, "I will be down in a moment." He was ready almost immediately, and as we reached the street he told me to hasten to the War Department telegraph office and notify Mr. Bates, the manager, of what had occurred; request him to summon to duty every operator available and see that every wire was manned. It required but a few minutes of lively sprinting to land me at the War Department, where I delivered Maj. Eckert's instructions to Manager Bates, who was on duty with others of the telegraph staff, including Albert B. Chandler and George C. Maynard. The latter had been in the theater when the President was shot, and had come direct to the telegraph office. Soon we were all busy sending and receiving important dispatches relating to the tragedy and to the efforts of the authorities to find the assassins.

Meals Served in Office.

Maj. Eckert established a relay of messengers between the Tenth street house and the War Department, and sent us frequent bulletins written by Secretary Stanton, which we transmitted over the wires for distribution to the press.

For several days the telegraph staff had their meals served in the telegraph office by order of Secretary Stanton. We lacked nothing for comfort except more exercise for our limbs beyond the confines of the building.

Booth Pursuer Dies

Union City, N. J., Aug. 5—(AP)—Samuel Kirby Gleason, Civil War veteran who witnessed the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, is dead at the age of eighty-six. Gleason was among those who ran from the theatre in an attempt to capture Booth.

8/5/30

PHILADELPHIA

JOHN WILKES BOOTH: He was born in Harford County, Md., in 1839. He was a professional actor, brother of the famous Edwin Booth. During the Civil War he sided with the Confederates and to avenge the defeat of their cause he organized a conspiracy against the life of Abraham Lincoln. On April 14, 1865, while the President was attending a performance in Ford's Theatre in Washington, Booth shot and mortally wounded him. He escaped from the theatre but in so doing, broke his leg. He concealed himself in Virginia until April 26. On being discovered he refused to surrender and he was shot.—(A. C.)

PHILADELPHIA

3 - 2 - 31

Eye-Witness Tells Story of Lincoln's Assassination

**Mrs. Luther E. L. Doethe, Ninety-Eight Years Old,
Saw Booth Sneak Into President's Box
and Fire Shot.**

DENVER, Col., Saturday (U. P.).—An eye-witness to the shooting of Abraham Lincoln in the Booth Theatre in Washington on the night of April 14, 1865, told the United Press today, on the 118th birthday of the civil war President, of how she watched John Wilkes Booth, sneak up to the President's box and fire the fatal shot.

"I went to the theatre that night with a Mr. Combs, a bank inspector," related Mrs. Luther E. L. Doethe, ninety-eight years old, who is in a charitable institution here. "Our seats were in the parquet right below the box in which Mr. Lincoln sat. The house was packed.

"I couldn't keep my eyes on the stage. I was a worshipper of the President, and I was looking at him when I saw Booth enter the box. I recognized him as I had often seen him hang around in front of the Kirkwood Hotel with some other worthless, third-rate actors.

"The house was rather dark and I doubt if anybody else saw Booth approach the President, or recognized him if they did. But it was all too quick for any one to warn Mr. Lincoln. There was a flash of fire and the noise of the report, and then the leap to the stage.

"I helped sew the fringe on the flag which tripped Booth. He broke his ankle. It has always made me happy to think that I had at least a small part in making Booth's flight difficult, for he might have gotten away if it hadn't been for the broken ankle. At any rate, it caused him some pain."

Mrs. Doethe is the widow of a former official in the French diplomatic service. Before that she was engaged in newspaper work. She lost her fortune, she said, in Wall street, and that's why she is now dependent.

The old lady said it was her opinion that Lincoln married in an effort to overcome his grief over the death of his first sweetheart.

Assassination

Assassination Eye-Witness

110. Joseph R. Findley, who sat but one seat removed from Lincoln's box the night Booth shot him. Four-page (8x13 inches), signed and sworn statement, dated Feb. 5, 1899, of about 1,200 words, describing, in good narrative style, exactly what happened in Ford's Theatre that fateful night of April 14th, 1865.

Illustrating the location of Findley's seat is a small ink sketch showing the outline of the Presidential box, Lincoln's seat, and Findley's seat, the second to the left in the front row of the theatre, a splendid vantage point.

Findley was Captain of Company A, 76th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry.

Findley's statement is believed to be entirely unpublished, for that reason no quotation from it is made here.

swed 52 \$65

Vivid Description Given Of Assassination Of Lincoln

Letter Written On April 16, 1865, Is Owned By
Mrs. Jennie Gilmore, 86; Was From Brother.

Coincident with the celebration of Lincoln's birthday this week, comes the unearthing here in Springfield of a remarkable letter written by a man who was present in Ford theatre at the time of the Emancipator's assassination.

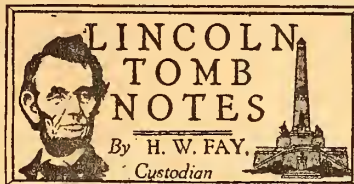
The unusual document is owned by Mrs. Jennie Gilmore, 86-year-old aunt of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Walsh with whom she resided at 1808 North Fifth street before being confined in Springfield hospital for the last month. The letter which follows in part was addressed to Mrs. Gilmore's mother: Washington, D. C.
April 16, 1865.

My Dear Sister:

... I was exceedingly fortunate on the 4th of March in getting a good position at the inauguration of President Lincoln. I stood only about three rods from him, heard every word he uttered, saw every expression that played on his countenance. But alas! Our magnanimous President's career was of shorter duration than we so fondly hoped for on that day. Friday last I had been studying hard all day and was weary. On going to dinner (we dine here at half past 4 o'clock) on passing Ford's Theatre I saw by a poster that Miss Laura Keane was to render "Our American Cousin" that night and that it was her last appearance in Washington. I stepped in and procured a ticket. How little did I dream that it was to admit me to the most terrible tragedy that history records. The President came in and was applauded loud and long. The play progressed with the greatest success and satisfaction 'till 25 minutes past 10. The stage was at that moment empty. I heard the report of a pistol and looked around—saw no stir and thought nothing of it, supposing it was an accidental discharge occasioned by some drunken man or soldier. As I turned my face toward the stage, I saw a man leap from the President's box down upon the stage, some 13 feet down, with gleaming knife in hand and revolver and rush across the stage and behind the scenery. Many thought it a part of the play 'till after he disappeared. No one could believe his own eyes. Could it be that an assassin had murdered the President of the United States—the Idol of the People? The man who loved them and extended mercy and a pardoning hand even to the rebels of the government? Every body was confounded and paralyzed not a move

it is to see eyes streaming with tears. I cried like a child myself today. Miles and miles of material drapes the buildings and residences in mourning. Flags are at half mast and the city is hushed in silence. President Lincoln was adored by those who see him frequently. . .

Charles A. Sanford.



About one hundred callers registered yesterday.

Maj. Gilbert P. Snell, stationed at Sheppard Field, Tex., called. Springfield he was in the service for sixteen years and the national guard fifteen years. He says Dr. Homer Macnamara is located at Camp Berkeley, about one hundred fifty miles from Sheppard Field. While he delivered mail for the tomb for years he had never had a chance to see the collection, and yesterday put in a quarter hour inspecting the things that please so many of the collectors and students of Lincoln.

Albert J. Hopkins, jr., of Cincinnati, and D. D. Berger of Chicago, were afternoon guests. Mr. Hopkins' father was congressman and U. S. senator for Illinois for a generation or two. He was born in sight of the birthplace of the writer, who knew him as a school boy and followed him all the years of his rise in politics. The son was shown about fifty different pictures of his father and about as many personal letters.

Dr. and Mrs. L. H. Apple of Casey were late callers.

The following officers of the U. S. army were on the register: Ens. M. J. Maher, Chicago; Corp. Fred G. Bittner, Evanston; Sgt. Clyde F. Thompson, Chicago; Pvt. George Dowdell, St. Louis.

Mr. and Mrs. James I. Morgan of St. Louis, were afternoon callers.

or motion was made till after he had left the stage when the audience recovered from the spell which bound them. You can imagine the confusion and excitement which followed. It was too real to be a dream and the bleeding President was borne out followed by a distracted wife. You can scarcely imagine the feeling that pervades Washington. The sorrow and mourning are indescribable. It is not considered a shame or weakness to weep over the foul and horrid crime. Nor

Peach Section

TOLEDO BLADE

TOLEDO, OHIO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 1936

Man Who Saw Lincoln Shot Muses on Tragedy

AGED WITNESS OF ASSASSINATION 71 YEARS AGO RECOUNTS DETAILS OF EVENT.

By the Associated Press

BATTLEBORO, Mass., April 15—Seventy-one years ago yesterday Thomas Sherman, a "down easter" who went to Washington because he had learned the new magic of the telegraph key, slipped into a balcony seat at Ford's theater. The play sped on to the third act.

Suddenly a shot cracked through the theater. A scuffle broke out in a box from which powder smoke lazily drifted. A man leaped from the box to the stage, and a cry rang out:

"Hold him! The President has been shot!"

Yesterday white-haired, white-bearded 93-year-old Thomas Sherman quietly recounted events he saw when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated April 14, 1865.

Only a polite burst of applause greeted Lincoln when he entered his box, Sherman mused. The crowd, he said, had come principally in the hope of seeing Gen. U. S. Grant, war hero of the day, who at the last minute was unable to attend.

"The shot seemed like a trick of the play until smoke issued from the President's box. Then a handsome young man of medium build, immaculately dressed in black, leaped from the box to the stage.

"He seemed a veritable fiend as he rose to his full height and brandished a dagger.

"The only actor on the stage, Harry Hawk, backed away, his hands held high, as John Wilkes Booth, the assassin, made a dive at him. Then both disappeared through the red-curtained exit."

For a moment, Sherman related, it was said the man had been

caught and there were cries "Kill him! Hang him!"

"I ran onto the stage," Sherman continued. "At the height of the confusion Laura Keane, an actress, came on. She seemed the only cool person there. 'For God's sake, gentlemen,' she begged, 'be quiet and keep cool.' She sent a pitcher of water to the President.

"Quiet was soon restored and the President, unconscious, was carried out by four men. Mrs. Lincoln followed, sobbing and wringing her hands."

As a telegrapher, Sherman was in the midst of Civil war activity. From the senate gallery, he recalled, he sent messages of impeachment proceedings against Andrew Johnson.

Later he became private secretary to James G. Blaine, and wrote a book, "Twenty Years With James G. Blaine." Sherman's career also carried him to Liverpool as American consul.

He was born in Bucksport, Me.

Witness Reveals Unrecorded Angle of Lincoln Death

Assassin Had Prepared
Loophole in Door of Box,
Says Californian

(By International News Service)

Los Angeles, Feb. 12.—Mrs. Anna L. Sweet, 90 years old, who believes she is the only living witness to the shooting of Abraham Lincoln in Ford's theater April 14, 1865, observed Lincoln's birthday today by making claim to another distinction—that she is the only living person who heard Lincoln's inaugural address as well as the shot that ended his life.

"I sat within 20 feet of President Lincoln when he delivered his inaugural address and within 15 feet of him when John Wilkes Booth pulled the trigger of his murder gun," Mrs. Sweet said.

"Something else not generally

known about the shooting is Booth had bored a hole in the door to the president's box through which he planned to fire in the event he could not gain entrance to the box. This fact is not in the history books," she said.

Cyrus E. Hull, 104, who heard several of Lincoln's campaign talks, was to observe Lincoln's birthday by addressing a civic club.

N.Y. JAMES

2-31-35

THE YORK DISPATCH, TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 1936.

RECALLS LINCOLN'S END

Thomas Sherman, 93, Tells How
President Was Shot April 14,
1865, by J. Wilkes Booth

ATTLEBORO, Mass., April 14 (AP).— Seventy-one years ago today Thomas Sherman, a "Down Easter" who went to Washington, because he had learned the new magic of the telegraph key, slipped into a balcony seat at Ford's theater. The play sped on to the third act.

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SAW LINCOLN ASSASSINATED

Last week in the Standard and Jerseyman, Captain William G. Clark of this city told what a thrill it gave him in after years to think that he had the pleasure of shaking hands with President Lincoln.

This recalled to Nathaniel S. Fox, of Bridgeton, formerly of this city that one of his friends, now over ninety years of age was in Ford's Theatre, Washington, D. C., on the night President Lincoln was shot. This man happens to be the oldest Odd Fellow in this section, probably in South Jersey.

He granted an interview to a representative of the Standard and Jerseyman and a photograph was secured of him, together with a flag made by a distant relative of Betsy Ross. This flag was made for use at the Centennial in 1876 and contains 36 stars, one for each state in the Union at that time.

He says "the scene in the theatre the night the martyred president was shot is one of the events pictured in my memory so vividly that I shall never forget it."

With only a few days schooling, this man now over 90 years old is unable to do much reading, but he has a retentive memory, and a wonderful vitality, the envy of persons much younger. On page eleven he gives a few memory pictures that make an interesting story on this the 122nd anniversary of Lincoln's Birthday...

*Bellevue Standard
& Jerseyman
2-12-31*

SAW LINCOLN SHOT

Doubts Flag Tripped Assassin—

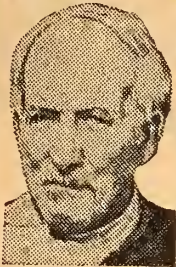
Says Booth Slid Down

Theatre Pillar

THEN RAN AWAY LIMPING

The shooting of Lincoln . . . the escape of the assassin Booth . . . the hysteria of the crowd in Ford's Theatre. . . .

Those events were recounted today by John Linsey at his home in Bridgeton, N. J. Linsey, a former soldier and iron puddler, saw the shooting. He is 92.



John Linsey

Between puffs on an old briar pipe, Linsey told the story.

"On the night of April 14, 1865, I went to see a play in Ford's Theatre. It was 'Our American Cousin.' I recall occupying the second seat from the aisle, seven rows from the pillar supporting the Presidential box.

"The war had ended and everybody was celebrating. The Bethlehem steel mill where I was a puddler had closed for a holiday, and I, accompanied by two fellow-workmen, went to Washington for a big blow-out—took \$75 and came back with 75 cents.

"I was in the theatre when President Lincoln and his family, together with military aides came in, about half past eight and entered their box. Everyone rose and cheered. Everyone seemed happy.

"The house was filled when the play began. It went along without a hitch until suddenly a shot rang out. For a few seconds it seemed a part of the play . . . but then a woman screamed. I heard men shouting.

Charles B. Bunting - 13-33

SAW LINCOLN SHOT, SAYS OHIO VETERAN

**Ex-Cavalryman Recalls Scene
in Theatre and Killing of
Booth Later.**

W. H. ROBERTS TELLS STORY

**His Unit Was Assigned to Search
for Booth and He Was on Duty
When He Was Shot.**

1927
FINDLAY, Ohio, Feb. 12 (P).—W. H. Roberts, Civil War veteran and said to be one of the few surviving witnesses of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in Ford's Theatre, Washington, April 14, 1865, recalled on Lincoln's anniversary today the scenes following the pistol shot which ended his life.

Roberts, then a cavalryman, declared that he was seated about thirty or forty feet from the President's box. Lincoln took his place in the flag-draped box and bowed as he received the ovation of the packed theatre, he said, and a moment later the curtain was rung up for the presentation of "Our American Cousin."

"The shot came in the midst of the play without warning," Roberts said. "Nearly every one feared, I believe, that the President had been the target of the gun."

"All appeared dazed for a moment, and then confusion prevailed as enraged spectators dashed toward the stage, to the street, or toward the spot where Lincoln had fallen."

It was then that John Wilkes Booth, the assassin, leaped on the stage and disappeared, said Roberts.

"A man leaped from the President's box to the stage, and a spur becoming entangled in the flags, threw him heavily to the floor," he continued. "Flourishing a dagger, Booth sprang to his feet and made his escape through the wings and a rear entrance."

Roberts said his unit was assigned to search for Booth and was on duty when he was found and shot. Roberts is commander of the Findlay G. A. R. Post,

Witness To Lincoln's Assassination Dies

Joseph M. Hazelton, who as a page boy at Ford's Theatre in Washington handed the program of "Our American Cousin" to President Lincoln on the evening of April 14, 1865, and a few minutes later witnessed the assassination, was buried this week after succumbing to an attack of pneumonia. He was 83 years old and lived at 2301 West Twenty-fourth Street.

Hazelton had been a character actor on stage and screen for 68 years and was famous for his lecture of his eye-witness account of Lincoln's death.

When John Wilkes Booth fired the shot that stunned the nation, the 12-year-old boy who saw it all had a ten-cent "shin-plaster" which Booth had given him only a few hours before.

Hazelton also had his own theory on the death of Booth. The actor, according to Hazelton, was joined by two conspirators, Herold and Rhudy, after the shooting, and the three crossed into Maryland, where Dr. Mudd set the fracture in Booth's foot. The trio went as far as Virginia, where they took shelter in a barn on the Garrett

farm. There Booth left his companions, thinking he could escape better alone. Army agents caught up with the party at Garrett's farm, and the agents killed Rhudy believing he was Booth.

Booth escaped to South America, where he remained for three years, then returned to the United States under the name of St. Helen. After migrating for several years, he became a friend of Pheonis Bates, attorney general of Tennessee, and was taken by Bates to Enid, Oklahoma, where, on the 38th anniversary of Lincoln's assassination, in 1903, Booth took his own life by swallowing 16 grains of arsenic and confessed his crime before he died.

Hazelton, whose uncle, General Frederick Foster, was a member of Grant's staff, had met Lincoln several times, and whenever Lincoln visited Ford's Theatre he accepted a program from the boy. Miss Elizabeth Rendell, 1315 South Flower, for years Hazelton's manager and who nursed him during his last illness, is now preparing a book on his life.

MAY 29, 1913, *Nat. Tribune*
Saw Lincoln Assassinated.

Editor National Tribune: In the Summer of 1862, after President Lincoln had issued the call for 300,000 more volunteers, Hezekiah Bowen, of Medina, N. Y., received authority from the Adjutant-General to recruit a company of independent riflemen. The quota of 100 men was soon filled, and with the noblest of the country. It was composed of American-born boys, with only two exceptions, mostly sons of well-to-do farmers.

We bought our own guns—Sharpe's rifles—each paying over \$40 apiece for them. The ladies of Ridgeway presented us with a very handsome

silk flag with "Bowen's Ind. Rifles" embroidered on it. We were the pride of our officers and the envy of others. On Aug. 13, 1862, we were mustered into the State service. Altho we were recruited as an independent company, subsequent arrangement was made with the Adjutant-General by which we should be Co. A, 151st N. Y.

From this time forward our interests and work were mainly with that regiment. I assisted in the duties of the camp and participated in all the movements of the regiment until Friday, Nov. 27, when, at the battle of Mine Run, I was wounded. On March 4, 1864, I was able for duty, and was transferred from the hospital at Alexandria, where I had been located, to Baltimore and placed on duty at the Medical Purveyor's Store of that city. This store was filled with all kinds of hospital supplies, and my duty was to help fill out and send off the requisitions that came from the hospitals.

While there on duty on June 7, I received a ticket and had a seat in the National Convention where President Lincoln was nominated for the second time.

About the first of July the Confederate General Early invaded the Shenandoah Valley, threatening Washington and Baltimore. On July 7 the First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Corps, was detached from the lines in front of Petersburg, marched to City Point and loaded on to transports, and brought up to Baltimore. There it was taken by rail to Frederick City and arrived there on the afternoon of the 8th, just as the Confederates were coming thru the pass west of the city.

On the 9th occurred that terrible battle of Monocacy, where that little brigade fought four times its number, meanwhile falling back to the city of Baltimore. On Sunday morning there was great excitement in the city, and we at the store were ordered to remove our goods to a large steamer lying

at the dock. We worked hard all that day, and on Monday morning I received an order as Sergeant of the guard to impress all the able men we needed to assist us in removing those goods from the store. We had a lively day of it, and on Tuesday, after the goods were removed, and having learned that the little brigade had gone into camp near the city, I had an opportunity to go and see the small fragment of my old regiment.

It was a sorry sight for me to see how thin had become its ranks. After getting back to the store I was detailed to go with the steamer in charge of the goods out into the bay, where we remained until the excitement of the city was over; then the goods were moved back. I remained at the store until Sept. 15, when I was transferred to Washington and placed on duty at the Medical Bureau of the Provost Marshal's Office.

I passed the Summer of 1864 very pleasantly, while my comrades at the front were participating in those hard-fought battles. At Washington I had the pleasure of attending a few of the President's receptions and also the inauguration. After the fall of Richmond the crowd of people upon the streets at Washington was immense, and everyone was joyous over our great victories. Soon, however, the city and Nation were plunged in grief. Lincoln was assassinated. I was at the theater at the time and was an eye-witness of that terrible tragedy. I well remember those exciting times. Those handsomely decorated buildings of the day before were hurriedly transformed into those of mourning.

While our dead President was lying in state I tried in vain to see him. The crowd was so great I gave it up. The funeral procession was an imposing sight.—John H. Stevens, 151st N. Y., Knowlesville, N. Y.

RAILROAD EMPLOYEE SAW LINCOLN SHOT

THE marching of Union veterans in Washington fifty years after their grand march over same route under the eyes of Grant and Sherman rivets attention upon another world-stirring incident of that olden day, writes Girard in the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Of all the many hundred persons who were in Ford's theatre when John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Lincoln, only a few are living. Fred W. Schwarz, for forty years a railroad man and finally secretary of branch lines for the Pennsylvania, is one of them.

For more than a year prior to that most dramatic of American tragedies Mr. Schwarz was an employe in the war department. I asked him yesterday to narrate to me in detail what he did and saw in Ford's theatre that historic Good Friday night, 1865.

"I could scarcely see President Lincoln from my chair, which was on the first floor of the theatre and not far from the orchestra," replied this veteran witness of the assassination. "We could all see Mrs. Lincoln and also Miss Harris, who was in the upper right-hand box with the presidential party; but the President's rocking chair was so far back in the box that many in the audience could not get a glimpse of him.

"The moving pictures now displaying the killing of Lincoln distort facts in making him appear conspicuously before the audience."

"What were the last words spoken by actors on the stage," I inquired, "which Lincoln could have heard?"

"I talked," replied Mr. Schwarz, "with Harry Hawk, leading man in the company, about that very thing. He confirmed my own recollection that it was in scene two, third act, of 'Our American Cousin,' which was the name of Laura Keane's play.

"Hawk himself was speaking when Booth's pistol shot put a permanent period to that play. As Asa Trenchard, Hawk was delivering the words of his dialogue with Mrs. Montchessington as follows:

"'Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, old gal, you sock-dologizing old man trap—'"

Hawk told Mr. Schwarz that he never finished that sentence, which must, therefore, have been the last words heard by Lincoln.

I asked Mr. Schwarz what he did after Booth had tumbled from the President's box upon the stage.

"He didn't leap," said Mr. Schwarz, "but he fell. There was confusion in the President's box. I saw Booth there with his dagger after he had shot Lincoln. I saw him fall upon the stage. He dramatically waved his hand and exclaimed, 'Sic Semper, Tyrannis!' and hurriedly limped to the back of the stage."

Like scores of others, Mr. Schwarz then clambered upon the stage. He saw Laura Keane display her blood-stained dress. She had been in Lincoln's box and held his head in her arms.

"Hawk told me," said Mr. Schwarz, "that he had talked that very afternoon with John Booth—he always called him John—but that the assassin had not intimated what his dark intentions

*Knickerbocker,
January 2, 1916.*

LINCOLN'S DEATH TOLD IN LETTER BY EYE-WITNESS

Baltimore Physician Has Document Written by Father Day After Assassination

WAS OFFICER ON MONTAUK

Went to Telegraph Office and Flashed News of Tragedy In Theatre to the World

A graphic, eye-witness account of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, penned the day after the tragedy by the late Dr. George B. Todd, surgeon aboard the Union monitor Montauk, was brought to light yesterday by Baltimore descendants of Dr. Todd as an interesting addition to collections of Lincolniana.

Dr. Todd's letter, written to his brother, Harry P. Todd, of Spenceport, N. Y., is at present in the hands of Mr. Todd's son, Harry S. Todd of Rochester, N. Y. It was sent to this city some time ago while photostatic copies were made for Dr. Fred P. Todd, 101 Woodlawn road, a son of Dr. Todd. A daughter of Dr. Todd, Mrs. John Hoffman, lives at 1413 West Lanvale street.

The copies were made by E. L. Bangs, an employe in the office of the auditor of disbursements of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and a collector of Lincolniana, and were brought to the office of The American yesterday by Miss Nellie M. Todd, daughter of Dr. Fred P. Todd, and granddaughter of the surgeon.

NEAR PRESIDENT'S BOX.

Dr. George B. Todd alluded in his letter to the reception given the President and Mr. Lincoln aboard the Montauk on April 14, 1865, the day of the assassination. That night he, with brother officers, occupied a seat near the Presidential box in Ford's Theatre, Washington, when Lincoln was shot down by John Wilkes Booth. Dr. Todd wrote that, upon the order of a general in the audience, he hurried to a telegraph office to give the nation word of the tragedy.

Dated at the Washington Navy Yard, April 15, 1865, the letter says:

"In the evening nearly all of us (referring to the ship's officers) went to Ford's Theatre. I was very early and got a seat very near the Presidential private box, as we heard he was to be there. About half-past nine he arrived, with his wife, a Miss Harris, and Major Heathburn and was cheered by every one.

BOOTH ENTERS.

"As soon as there was a silence the play went on, and I could see that the 'Pres' seemed to enjoy it very much. About 10.25 P. M. a man came in and walked slowly along the side on which the 'Pres' box was. I heard a man say, 'There's Booth,' and I turned my head to look at him. He was still walking very slow and was near the box door, when he stopped, took a card from his pocket, wrote something on it and gave it to the usher, who took it to the box.

"In a minute the door was opened and he walked in. No sooner had the door closed than I heard the report of a pistol, and on the instant Booth jumped out of the box onto the stage, holding in his hand a large knife, and shouted so as to be heard all over the house, 'Sic Semper Tyrannis' (so always with tyrants), and fled behind the scenes. I attempted to get to the box, but I could not, and in an instant the cry was raised, 'The President is assassinated.' Such a scene I never saw before.

EYE WITNESSES
[BINDER] 1 of 5

DRAWING 13A

ASSASSINATION

